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ABSTRACT

In this study the counseling services of a suburban high school were evaluated. Counseling services were viewed as those normally available at a high school, namely, direction, advice, and guidance for academic, career, and personal matters. Specific research questions were guided by the individual questions on the two surveys that were distributed. High school seniors (N=96) completed the Counseling Services Assessment Blank. Teachers (N=70) completed a questionnaire which asked the number of contacts with a counselor; evaluation of the counselors; perception of the department; and dialogue responses. Most answers on both the student and the administrator/teacher questionnaires required the responses be given on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 6. When the means were computed for all questions utilizing the Likert-type scale, all means on both surveys were above the average score of 3.0. Considering that all scores on both the student and the teacher questionnaires were above average, it can be concluded that the counseling services at the selected high school are effective in providing the services the students and teachers require. Based on some of the comments of both groups, there is still room for improvement. (ABL)

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ABSTRACT

EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE COUNSELING SERVICES AT A SELECTED SUBURBAN HIGH SCHOOL

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B.A., Ursuline College, 1965
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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
The Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

WALDEN UNIVERSITY
November, 1992

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ABSTRACT

This study involved an evaluation of the counseling services at a selected suburban high school. The counselors at the high school attempt to meet the needs of the student and faculty populations. To determine if this was being accomplished, some form of evaluation was necessary.

The general purpose of this study was to examine the question: Are the counseling services provided at a selected suburban high school effectively meeting the needs of the students and faculty? Counseling services were viewed as those normally available at a high school, namely, direction, advice, and guidance for academic, career, and personal matters. Specific research questions were guided by the individual questions on the two surveys that were distributed.

A random sample of 100 seniors and all (135) teachers and administrators were asked to complete surveys regarding the counseling services at the high school. The students were given the Counseling Services Assessment Blank (CSAB). Of the 100 students selected, 96 completed the survey. The faculty members were given a survey constructed by the researcher. Of the 135 faculty members who were given the survey, 70 completed it. Demographic information from both questionnaires was reported in percentages while other data were reported in percentages, means, medians, and standard deviations. Answers to free response questions were

organized into categories and reported as direct quotes.

Most answers on both the student and the administrator/teacher questionnaires required the responses be given on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 6. On such a scale, a 3.0 would be considered an average score. When the means were computed for all questions utilizing the Likert-type scale, all means on both surveys were above 3.0.

It can be concluded that on the average, the services provided by the counseling staff at the selected high school are effective in meeting the needs of both students and faculty.

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CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

This study involved the students in a suburban high school located in a community of approximately 36,000 residents. The high school is the only one in a district that covers an area of 30 square miles. The school is located on an 80 acre campus with 10 buildings that are populated by approximately 2,250 students in grades 10 through 12. The faculty consists of 156 professionals including seven counselors (two for each grade level and one vocational counselor).

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the counseling services provided by the guidance staff at the selected high school. The services provided include personal, career, and academic counseling on an individual basis and in groups, and academic and career testing.

Statement of the Problem

This study considered the issue of effective counseling services at the high school level. The problem was the counselors at the selected high school strive to meet the counseling needs of the students who seek their services, but some form of evaluation was necessary to determine

whether or not they were achieving their goal.

Background of the Problem

The function of the counseling staff at a high school is to meet the counseling needs of the student population. These may include academic, career, and personal needs. Because of the structure of the modern family (single parents and/or working parents), at times the only guidance students receive about career choices, college choices, or personal matters is from school counselors. Since the youth of today will become the leaders of tomorrow, it is critical to provide effective counseling services to aid them in becoming viable, contributing members of society. Consequently, the role of the guidance staff at a high school has undergone major changes and has become a significant factor in the overall development of youth in all areas of their lives.

The Purpose

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the counseling services at a selected suburban high school to determine if the counseling needs of the students enrolled were being effectively met.

Rationale or Theoretical Basis for the Study

The counseling and guidance services are an integral part of the educational process in today's high schools. Students depend on their counselors for direction and

answers when faced with an academic problem or a personal crisis. If done effectively, counseling can improve the students' emotional state and thus contribute to a better frame of mind for learning. Counselors are in the mainstream of the school environment and play a major role in the whole educational process. Therefore, it is important that the services that they provide meet the needs of the students for whom they are responsible.

Research Questions

The general purpose of this study was to examine the question: Are the counseling services provided at a selected suburban high school effectively meeting the needs of the student population?

Specifically, the research questions were:

Research Question 1: Are students able to obtain information about themselves through the counseling services?

Research Question 2: Are students able to obtain information about education and occupations through the counseling services?

Research Question 3: Are students able to resolve conflicts within themselves as a result of the counseling services?

Research Question 4: Are students able to resolve conflicts with others as a result of the counseling services?

Research Question 5: Are students able to develop academic, social, and/or work skills as a result of the counseling services?

Research Question 6: Do students find the tests administered by the counselor(s) to be helpful?

Research Question 7: Do students feel counselor(s) will maintain confidentiality of the information disclosed in individual counseling sessions?

Research Question 8: Do students feel the other group members will maintain confidentiality of the information disclosed in group counseling sessions?

Research Question 9: Do students view the overall individual counseling sessions to be a positive experience?

Research Question 10: Do students view the overall group counseling sessions to be a positive experience?

Research Question 11: Do students find their individual counselor(s) to be helpful?

Research Question 12: Do students find their group counselor(s) to be helpful?

Research Question 13: Do students perceive other group members to be helpful?

Research Question 14: Do students perceive the physical facilities of the counseling center to be conducive to counseling?

Research Question 15: Do students see their coming to counseling as a demonstration of strength and adequacy?

Research Question 16: Do students view the overall counseling experience to be positive?

Research Question 17: Do teachers and/or administrators perceive counselor(s) to be of assistance to them when they encounter students with academic and personal problems?

Research Question 18: Do teachers and/or administrators view counselor(s) to be of assistance during parent conferences?

Research Question 19: Do teachers and/or administrators consider the time students spend out of the classroom to see their counselor(s) to be well-spent?

Research Question 20: Do teachers and/or administrators view counselor(s) to be helpful to students?

Research Question 21: Do teachers and/or administrators consider the time students spend in taking tests administered by the counselor(s) to be well-spent?

Research Question 22: Do teachers and/or administrators give the overall counseling services a positive rating?

Research Question 23: Do teachers and/or administrators perceive the physical facilities of the counseling center to be conducive to counseling?

Significance of the Study

Since the primary goal of a high school is the education of its students, it is important to facilitate

that goal in any way possible with effective supportive services. Counseling, being one of those supportive services, aids in the educational process if done well. It is important to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the counseling program from different perspectives and make appropriate changes if necessary to improve the services provided.

Operational Definition of Terms

Counseling services. These services include academic, vocational, and personal counseling on an individual basis and in groups and academic and vocational testing.

Counseling needs. The needs of students include help in making choices about colleges and careers, guidance in dealing with personal problems and crises, and aid in making academic choices about high school courses.

Effectivity. The degree of satisfaction students experience, the frequency of use of the counseling facilities and staff, and the attitudes regarding the counselors of those who use the services all enter into the effectiveness of the services provided. Also, effectiveness can be viewed in terms of the degree to which the learning process has been facilitated as a result of the students' use of the counseling services.

Assumptions

1. The students and faculty at the selected high

school were aware of the counseling services available and they used them at various times during the school year.

2. When asked to evaluate the services provided, the students and faculty were honest and fair in their judgments.
3. Students and faculty should have effective support services available to them to enhance the educational process.
4. Using questionnaires in this type of study provides the most objective data.

Scope and Limitations

The only students involved in this study were members of the senior class. Seniors were used as the target population because they had access to the counseling services the longest and had been directly associated with most of the counselors on staff at the school.

Administrators and teachers were the only staff members at the selected school who were given a survey requesting an evaluation of the counseling services.

Counseling services in this study were limited to those that are normally provided at a high school, namely, direction, advice, and guidance with academic, career, and personal matters. Students with severe psychological problems are referred to the appropriate agencies or hospitals for treatment.

This study was limited to counseling services at a selected high school and the perceptions of seniors, teachers, and administrators at that high school. Results of the study were used with reference to this specific high school and were not used to make judgments about counseling services at other locations. The goal of the study was to determine the effectiveness of the counseling services provided at one particular high school, not high schools in general.

Organization of the Remainder of the Study

The remainder of the study is devoted to:

1. a review of the literature in the area of school counseling services particularly at the high school level and an evaluation of these services
2. a description of the instruments that were used and the procedure that was followed
3. an analysis of the data that were collected on the questionnaires
4. summary, conclusions, and recommendations for future study.

Summary

Since so many students receive very little guidance from other sources in these changing times of altered forms of the traditional family structure, school counselors have

assumed a very significant role in the overall development of children. This has created a need more than ever for effective counseling services at schools. In order to determine the effectiveness of these services at the selected high school, an evaluation was necessary.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction and Structure of the Chapter

Guidance and counseling services were initiated at the turn of the century by Frank Parsons who is called the "Father of Guidance". In 1908 as Director of Civil Service House in Boston, Parsons founded a vocational bureau to help young men obtain jobs. He believed that individuals could make wise choices about careers only after acquiring some knowledge about their own abilities and skills. About the same time (1898), Jessie B. Davis started guidance services in Michigan schools and Eli Weaver began programs in New York City to help students find suitable jobs. The emphasis by all these men was on vocational guidance.

By 1910 many schools saw the need for this type of vocational guidance and a conference was held in Boston for professionals who performed these services in schools. Then in 1913 in Grand Rapids, Michigan, a national organization was founded called the National Vocational Guidance Association which became the catalyst for the guidance movement in the schools.

Since that time, guidance services have expanded beyond vocational areas to include all areas of students' lives. The greatest stimulation to the guidance movement occurred

in 1958 with the passage of the National Defense Education Act which provided millions of dollars to local school district to expand their guidance services and to train school counselors (Shertzer & Peters, 1965, pp. 5-8).

Because guidance services did not become widespread in most school districts until the early 1960s, comprehensive evaluations to determine the effect of these services could not be conducted until recently. The review of the literature reflects the newness of the school counseling profession and the need for evaluation and accountability in the field.

This study involved the effectiveness of a school's counseling services as perceived by students and faculty who use the services. To investigate the studies that have been conducted in this area, four different topics have been explored. They include studies focusing on the following: students' opinions of counseling services provided, the perceived role of the counselor in the high school, accountability for and evaluation of counseling services available, and the characteristics of effective counseling centers. The following review examines all four areas emphasizing primarily those studies dealing with high school counseling centers although some valuable information has been included considering the services at colleges, junior high schools, and elementary schools.

Review of Literature on Students' Opinions Related to Counseling Services

It is appropriate that the opinions of the students receiving the counseling services be considered the most accurate appraisal of the services provided. Some areas to investigate are: do students use the facilities, if they do, how often, and how effective are the services in their judgments?

In 1979 Bewley conducted a national study requesting seniors throughout the nation to complete a questionnaire dealing with their high school counseling services. Although this study is more than 10 years old, it contains some valuable information on the opinions of seniors in high school concerning the counseling services they received. They were asked how frequently they used the services and how helpful they were. The sample consisted of more than 17,000 seniors from about 130 public schools. Results showed that more than half (53.7%) reported seeing a counselor individually three or more times. Only 11.5% reported not seeing a counselor during their senior year. The majority of seniors (83.5%) reported seeing a counselor at least once during their senior year. Concerning satisfaction with the number of contacts with a counselor, 52.9% felt they had had sufficient contacts while 32.3% said they wanted more. Only 13.8% stated they would have preferred less. When responses were viewed by race, 50.3% of black students wished for more contacts while 32.0% of

white students wanted more. With regard to satisfaction of services, 36.7% reported counselors being very helpful, 27.1% reported their being somewhat helpful, and 36.2% reported their being of little or no help (pp. 66-70).

This study is significant in that the results revealed that 63.8% of the students reported their counselors were helpful to some degree. The fact that 83.5% of the seniors reported seeing a counselor at least once would implied that students are using the services and are being helped. The large number in the sample (17,000) lends credence to the study.

In a study reported in 1987 by Bruckner and Thompson, a sentence completion test was used to get elementary students' opinions regarding the counseling serviced being provided. Responses were rated on a 5 point scale. This was done each year during the last 2 weeks of school. One of the most valuable sources of information was the section for student comments. This proved to be very helpful in the evaluation process. The results were used to change the program for the following year to meet the needs of the students. Also, in order to get parents involved, group guidance letters were sent home each year describing the topics to be covered such as self-esteem, behavioral problems, decision making, and problem solving (pp. 193-196).

This study could be considered a forerunner of the

site-based management concept. Using both student and parent comments and suggestions to make changes for the following year would assure that many of the needs of the population being served would be meet.

In another study, seniors were surveyed in Indiana high schools during the 1987-88 school year to determine how they viewed the responsibilities of school counselors and to determine problems for which high school seniors would ask their counselors for help. They were given a 24 item Likert-type questionnaire. Results indicated that students felt responsibilities of counselors involved school-related administrative type services and helping students with personal problems. Students felt more comfortable discussing school related problems than personal ones with counselors (Hutchinson & Reagan, 1989, pp. 271-280).

Considering the attitudes of many adolescents regarding adults, it may be better for them to discuss personal problems in a group guidance setting with interaction and support from their peers. Many adolescents often trust the opinions of their peers more than those of adults. It takes time for a school counselor to develop that trust and rapport necessary to help students with their personal problems.

Another study that supports this conclusion regarding the reluctance of students to discuss personal problems with school counselors was conducted by Rowe (1989). It dealt

with high school seniors and how they used their counselors and other significant people in their lives to help them with post-secondary plans. The following questions were asked: (1) What were the self-reported frequency of discussions that entering college freshman had with their counselors during senior year related to job, college, careers, academic work, and personal problems? (2) What were the self-reported frequency of discussion that entering college freshmen had concerning post-high school plans during senior year with siblings, parents, principals, assistant principals, peers, and ministers?

Results from a questionnaire indicated that they discussed the following with their counselors in this order: college plans, high school work, jobs and occupations, personal problems. They discussed their plans with the following in this order: mother, peers, father, siblings, high school teachers and administrators, high school counselors, religious leaders (pp. 260-264). Peer opinion was considered high on the list second only to mother while counselor opinion was placed second to last.

The program evaluators of the Phoenix Union High School District conducted a study of the effectiveness of their guidance and counseling program description booklet outlining the services provided by their counseling staff. Students (N=1,219) responded to a survey covering topics from the booklet including registration for classes,

schedule changes, and personal and social problems. Throughout the district, students found counselors to be accessible, but only a few students solicited help from counselors for personal problems. Counselors were also given a survey and they indicated that a *high* priority should be given to counseling students with personal problems.

One major obstacle to individual counseling for personal problem is the amount of time counselors spend on registration and scheduling of classes. One recommendation made as a result of this study was the addition of clerical help to the counseling staff to complete some of the paperwork now being done by the counselors so that there would be more time for individual counseling (Norris & Finley, 1982).

In another student survey conducted by Wiggins and Moody (1987), the students indicated that those counselors who have direct contact with students in either individual or group setting were perceived to be the most effective. Administrative duties seemed to interfere with counselor effectiveness according to the students. The study emphasized the need for student feedback as part of every counseling system (pp. 353-361).

Administrative duties are a part of every school counselor's responsibilities but if they detract from the counselor's effectiveness, what part of the day should be

spent in these functions? This leads to the next topic, the role of the school counselor.

Review of Literature on the Role of the School Counselor

The role of the counselor may take on many dimensions depending on the school district and the administration in the school. The duties of the school counselor may run the gamut from substitute teacher to file clerk. In some districts the counselor never has time to counsel. There are specific roles and functions germane to the school counselor as reported in the studies below.

According to Tennyson (1989), the following are the main functions of school counselors: counseling, consulting, assisting in career plans, evaluating and assessing, developing guidance programs (managing and coordinating), and performing administrative support services. Most time should be spent in working with individual students' personal problems followed by helping with educational and career plans and lastly, scheduling classes (pp. 253-259).

This study depicts the ideal. As was reported in the studies dealing with students' opinions concerning counselors, helping with personal problems was considered by students to be the least important role of the school counselor. Ironically, scheduling classes which is last on the list, usually takes most of the counselor's time.

George (1986) delineated the characteristics of successful schools including a common mission (importance of education), program alignment toward the mission, inspired instructors (believe all students can learn), group involvement, and spirited leadership. He suggested that the counselor in the school assume a new role as the "educational ombudsman". The counselor would have the responsibility for making sure that the basic components of the program are implemented successfully by guiding the program alignment with the mission, facilitating inspired instructors, guaranteeing group involvement, and belonging to a spirited leadership team (pp. 178-188). Considering that many counselors are buried in paperwork, George's view of the school counselor is a goal rather than a reality.

Gibson (1990) looked at the way guidance programs were in 1965 and compared them with the present. The source of the information was a teacher survey given in 1965 and again in 1986. In 1965 guidance programs were flourishing because of the funds available for counselor training under the National Defense Education Act of 1958. There was an increase from 12,000 counselors in 1958 to 30,000 in 1964.

In general, the results of the survey showed that secondary teachers still believe that counselors have a positive influence on the instructional program of the school. Teachers feel that individual counseling is the most important function of the school counselor followed by

distribution of career and educational information and lastly, test administration and interpretation (pp. 248-255). This study confirms the discrepancy between the teachers' view of the role of the counselor as it relates to individual counseling and the reality that most counselors spend most of their time in administrative and secretarial tasks rather than counseling.

In their study, Housley, McDaniel, and Underwood (1990) examined the assessment process that was changed because of the Education Reform Act of 1982. The act required the development of generic performance competencies for an assessment process, validation of such competencies, and the construction of a system for the assessment of the performance of certified school personnel. The State Department together with a task force established by the Mississippi Counseling Association (MCA) identified 11 competencies for counselors. They are: (1) organize and administer guidance program; (2) provide counseling interviews with students during the school year; (3) provide group guidance and counseling activities for students during the year; (4) coordinate student appraisals; (5) assist students with career development and planning in individual and group guidance sessions; (6) assist students with educational planning in individual counseling and group guidance sessions; (7) assist with referrals; (8) assist in the placement of students in the appropriate educational

program and/or job; (9) consult with students, parents, teachers, administrators, and other appropriate individuals; (10) coordinate program evaluations; (11) maintain professional growth and development. Counselors in general found the assessment process to be a positive experience and the greatest benefit was the clarification of their role and function (pp. 294-302).

It is interesting to note how the problems with which the school counselor is presented have changed over the years. In the 1960s and 1970s, students' problems would usually involve simple disputes with parents over curfews or use of the family car or disputes with classmates about teasing or loss of a friendship. Today the school counselor is faced with teenage pregnancy, suicide, gangs, drugs, incest, and child abuse among other societal problems. This change has certainly influenced the role of the school counselor. As the streets invade the schools, school counselors are being asked to assume roles for which they may not be trained to handle such as policeman, parent, and/or psychotherapist.

In a recent study done by Herr (1986), he asked the question: Are school counselors relevant? He identified recent areas of need including single-parent families, chemical dependency, grief and bereavement, adolescent suicide, child sexual abuse, learning disabilities, and anger. He concluded that school counselors are responsible

for too many students and their roles have been stretched to the limit. He recommended that services be expanded with a sharpening of the counselors' role to include help from parents, teachers, and others through planned interactions. He suggested that the dominant role of the school counselor be helping students with vocational choices, higher education, and coping skills (pp. 7-13).

As schools are asked to assume more and more of the responsibility to not only educate children in the academic areas, but also in all areas of life, greater demands will be placed on school counselors. How many responsibilities can be placed on counselors before their effectiveness becomes attenuated?

Review of Literature on Accountability and Evaluation of Counseling Services

As with any organization or job assignment, it is necessary for school counselors to conduct evaluations periodically to determine accountability and effectiveness. Some counselors resist these evaluations as reported by Bishop and Trembley in their 1987 study. Counselors claim it takes valuable time away from other more important functions of counselors. Their article suggested that accountability and evaluation are important because they provide some evidence about the usefulness of the services available, obtain information necessary for decisions to be made about future activities, and provide data about the

weaknesses of the services (pp. 491-494). All this information is necessary if the services are to meet the needs of the population being served. Without evaluation and accountability, effectiveness would be lost.

In their study, Daniels, Mines, and Gressard (1981) stressed the importance of program evaluation both from a professional and financial point of view. There are two factors that have complicated the evaluation process: (1) the public's increased concern for financial responsibility (accountability) and (2) the counselors' lack of understanding of the evaluation process (pp. 578-582). Considering the state of the nation's economy today, it is extremely critical that counselors demonstrate their usefulness through evaluations for their employment may be at stake. They had better find the time to carry out the evaluation with aplomb.

Evaluating counseling programs provides important information for future planning but evaluation is often viewed by the counselor as a process for the researcher rather than for the practitioner. The 10 myths presented by Frith and Clark (1982) can be applied to all levels of school counseling. The myths are as follows: (1) sophisticated skills are needed to conduct evaluations; (2) most school systems cannot afford extensive evaluations because they are too expensive; (3) children are not good sources of evaluation data; (4) evaluation data must result

from objective procedures, not subjective ones; (5) soliciting evaluation data from parents is not worth the effort; (6) evaluation requires extensive amounts of time; (7) evaluation procedures require the sampling of a large number of participants; (8) school administrators often do not support extensive evaluations; (9) evaluation is primarily done for the purpose of research and publication; (10) interpretation of evaluation data requires extensive statistical analysis (pp. 49-51).

To help counselors with the evaluation process, Keene and Stewart (1989) described six methods of evaluation: (1) experimental, (2) case study, (3) expert opinion, (4) self-evaluation, (5) time cost analysis, (6) follow-up studies. The type of evaluation depends on the goals established for conducting the evaluation. Problem areas in evaluation include: (1) selecting evaluative devices, (2) interpreting and using data obtained from evaluative devices, (3) organizing and administering the program. Evaluations help counselor credibility (pp. 62-66).

Matthay (1988) asked the following questions concerning the counselors in Connecticut public schools: (1) Who is responsible for counselor evaluation and how often are counselors evaluated? (2) What methods are used to evaluate counselors and how satisfied are evaluators with their methods? (3) Does the size of the high school affect satisfaction with the evaluation process? (4) Based on

evaluation content, what skills are counselors expected to possess to perform their roles? (5) Are there differences among suburban, rural, and urban school districts regarding the skills required to perform the counselor's role?

Questionnaires were sent to principals to obtain answers to these questions. The results showed that the most commonly used form of evaluation for counselors was goal setting with a supervisor who later measures goal attainment. Principals felt the most important function of counselors is to assist students with course selection and registration followed by assisting students with post-secondary school placement (pp. 383-393).

This study demonstrates the very narrow view of the counselor's role that many principals possess, seeing the counselor not as an individual with expertise to help students with problems, but as a scheduler of classes and a provider of information. Although these are very significant functions of a school counselor, they are only two of many and probably would not be considered the most important to counselors especially when considering accountability.

According to Russo (1989), the role of the counselor is sometimes misunderstood by students, parents, teachers, and administrators. Counselors need to demonstrate accountability. To achieve this, they must set some goals which should include educational counseling followed by

personal and social counseling, and lastly, by vocational and career counseling for all their students (pp. 265-269).

Wilkinson's (1988) study dealt with counselor accountability and time analysis. She suggested that counselors keep an itemized log of their school and counseling activities for an entire year to determine how time is spent. The time analysis for the full year can prove to be very beneficial in deciding where changes need to be made in the services provided. To assure a successful study, counselors should select appropriate log materials, determine how to categorize the data from the log, and devise a method for summarizing the data (pp. 370-376). This would also be very beneficial to present to administrators and school boards who sometimes question how counselors use their time.

One of the major goals of accountability is to demonstrate effectiveness. Mines and Gresssard (1982) offered a metamodel for evaluation of student services. They suggested that the following questions be asked: (1) What is the purpose of the evaluation? (2) What questions(s) does the evaluation intend to answer? (3) What are the conceptual assumptions the evaluator is willing to make? (4) For whom is the evaluation intended? (5) What is (are) the best available method(s) for finding answers to the questions asked? (6) Does the student practitioner or administrator have the knowledge and

technical capability to complete the evaluation? (pp. 195-201).

Although this model was suggested for the evaluation of college level student services, it can be applied to any level of counseling services. Number 5 dealing with methodology would need to have top priority for if the instruments being used were not adequate or appropriate, the evaluation would be worthless. Also, one of the major considerations in any evaluation is objectivity on the part of the evaluator. This issue would have to be addressed if the evaluation is to be unbiased and accurate.

Wentling and Piland (1982) also offered a model for evaluation of counseling services. They gave a seven-step procedure/task breakdown as follows: Task A is appoint an evaluation team, Task B is establish a tentative timetable, Task C is obtain official approval from administration, Task D is complete the evaluation design (determine what is to be measured and evaluated), Task E is collect the data, Task F is summarize and prepare a report of results, Task G is utilizing the results (pp. 7-8). The authors gave some excellent examples of student and teacher questionnaires that could be used in evaluations plus cover letters and career interest instruments.

Schmidt (1990) believes that accountability rests to a large degree with the performance appraisal of the counselor and appropriate evaluative procedures developed to determine

effectiveness. His first question is: What will be evaluated? Specifically "What behaviors and practices are illustrative of effective functioning" (p. 87)? He enumerated six major functions:

1. *Program Planning*: organizational abilities, planning skills, and time management.
2. *Counseling:* knowledge of appropriate models, techniques, and processes for individual and group counseling.
3. *Consulting:* skills and techniques for working with students, parents, and teachers.
4. *Coordinating:* Communication skills and ability to use referral processes.
5. *Student Appraisal:* competence in the use of standardized and nonstandardized assessment instruments.
6. *Professional Practices and Development*: knowledge of ethical and legal procedures and a demonstration of continued professional development (p. 87).

Schmidt's next question is: How will the performance appraisal be done? He suggested observation of classroom activities, parent educational meetings, and teacher in-service presentations. Video and audio tapes of counseling sessions could be made with permission from the students and parents. Interviewing counselors about specific services or

counseling activities, reviewing reports and other project completed by the counselor, looking at student records without revealing the identities of students, and getting feedback from students, parents, and teachers are all means of appraising counselors.

The next question is: Who will evaluate? Schmidt included principals, lead counselors, and peer counselors. He recommended that counselors be evaluated in three areas: administrative, program, and clinical. One person usually does not possess the expertise to do all three, therefore a team evaluation is necessary for a thorough appraisal of counselors (pp. 86-93).

Schmidt emphasized an important issue in this article, that there is little agreement as to the specific competencies and practices that should be measured in evaluating school counselors. It seems to be a judgment call depending on who is the evaluator, usually the school principal. More objective instruments need to be made available so that school counselors can be appraised equitably.

Review of Literature on Effective Counseling Programs

One of the major questions asked by counselors is "What constitutes an effective counseling program?" This, of course, would depend on the needs of the population. Counseling students for post-secondary education may be

beneficial to the students in one school district while those in another may need help with information about employment possibilities immediately after high school. In some school districts both of these may be relevant.

It may be useful to consider what constitutes ineffective counseling programs before examining effective qualities. Brown (1989) described some key problems in counseling centers that prove ineffective: (1) no clear objectives, (2) change process perceived as a change in staff, (3) resistance to change, (4) time factor (time is needed to bring about change). Other problems include: (1) the principal's misunderstanding or deliberate misdirection of the counseling program, (2) poorly educated counselors, (3) lack of plan for an assessment of pupil needs, (4) unethical practices, (5) poor public relations failing to communicate the role of the counselors and the objectives of the program.

Assessment can be accomplished by asking the following questions: (1) How are counselors relating to other members of the school community? (2) What do counselors do in this particular school? (3) How do students, teachers, and parents feel about the counseling services? (4) Can a consultant identify problems and offer remedies? Once problems have been identified, goals must be delineated. In summary, problems must be identified, solutions must be offered, and counselors need to be part of implementing the

solutions (pp. 47-53).

It is extremely important that in an effort to be effective, the counselors provide services to the general population of a school. In 1987 the New Hampshire State Board of Education initiated a comprehensive counseling program that would provide counseling services to all students, not just a few. It consisted of four components: (1) a guidance curriculum made up of competencies at various stages of development, (2) individualized planning with students and parents, (3) responsive counseling, consultation, and referral, (4) program management and systems support including accountability (Carr & Hayslip, 1989, pp. 41-46).

Dagley (1987) presented a model for developmental guidance. This concept also emphasizes that guidance is for all students to promote maximum development in all spheres of their lives. The goals of the model are lifelong learning, personal effectiveness, and life roles. Lifelong competencies consist of communication skills, information processing skills, and personal enrichment skills including personal responsibility for growth. Personal effectiveness competencies include self-understanding and self-esteem, human relation skills, and health development skills. Life role competencies include daily living skills, career planning skills, and employability skills (job seeking skills and good work habits) (pp. 102-109).

These are very ambitious goals for school counselors who very often find themselves bombarded by students in crisis and parents arriving unannounced demanding conferences immediately. It would appear the only way to accomplish these goals would be in daily classroom sessions which would take the counselors out of their offices and place them back in the classroom. Time management remains one of the major problems of school counselors.

Another factor to consider in the realm of accountability is differences among students due to their backgrounds. Hartman and Askounis (1989) stressed the importance of school counselors understanding the culture of the students that they are counseling. For example, Asian culture is rooted in the Confucian ideal that emphasizes family values and education. Asian students are very private and are taught not to share family problems with "outsiders". Effectiveness as a counselor is dependent on knowing the cultural background of the students being counseled and respecting their values (pp. 109-112).

Very often effectiveness is contingent on who is making the judgment. For instance, in a study conducted by Chapman, Demasi, and O'Brien (1991), 1,000 parents and 1,000 students were asked to complete a survey concerning the counseling services students received about college selection. The results indicated two totally different perceptions concerning the services received. Parents

significantly overestimated the students' initiation of counseling sessions and underestimated the extent to which the counselors initiated the counseling sessions. Parents in general gave counselors a low rating in overall effectiveness (pp. 268-278).

This study seems to indicate that parents have a low opinion of the affect counselors have on their children. One problem may be the expectations that the parents sometimes have about just what the school counselor can accomplish. Student loads and the increase in the number of students with serious problems make some of the demands of parents on counselors somewhat unrealistic.

In order to become effective, changes must be made. Henderson (1989) gave the steps needed to change a system: (1) commit to change; (2) establish leadership to steer the change process; (3) adopt a program model that provides the vision of what could be; (4) identify the discrepancies between what is and what could be; (5) define the vision operationally; (6) set goals for the change; (7) enlist the help of those who can help reach the goals; (8) help all school counselors feel competent to make the needed changes; (9) collaborate with others who will be affected by changes; (10) make effective changes in program strategies; (11) evaluate the changes made (pp. 31-40).

There are many schools that exist today that have successful and effective counseling programs. Miller (1988)

mailed surveys to counselors in schools identified as excellent by the U. S. Department of Education. Questions were asked regarding their priorities in counselor responsibilities. The results obtained were as follows in rank order: (1) counseling/consultation, (2) career assistance, (3) coordination, (4) professional development, (5) educational planning, (6) organization, (7) assessment, (8) discipline (pp. 88-93).

Interestingly enough, the most effective programs view counseling as the top priority which is more than likely the forte of the counselor. Perhaps this should be a clue to those who assign duties to the counselors in the schools that they should allow them to do what they were trained to do, namely, counsel.

Schmidt (1986) gave four ideas on how counselors can become more effective in their schools: (1) be identifiable, (2) be capable, (3) be available, (4) be accountable. The main goal of counselors in any school should be to assist the people in that school in becoming more able as students, parents, and teachers (pp. 16-22).

The climate of the school certainly has an affect on the effectiveness of the counseling. According to Thomas (1989), a positive, supportive, people-oriented school climate is the foundation of effective schools. To promote effective schools counselors need to: "(1) support the position that success for every student is the basic purpose

of schools", (2) "expect the best from everyone", (3) "express affection for the students and help others to do the same", (4) "promote collegiality and teamwork in the school", (5) "initiate a comprehensive recognition program for staff members and students", (6) "promote ethical practices" (pp. 249-252). In general, a positive attitude toward every student would certainly creative a climate conducive to effective counseling.

Does the attitude a counselor possesses toward him/herself influence effectiveness? Wiggins (1990) asked counselors from a three state mid-Atlantic region to complete a self-esteem inventory, a counselor self-report form, a demographic data sheet, and a vocational preference inventory. Results indicated that counselors who tested high on self-esteem inventory were the ones who felt competent in working with individuals within an organized framework and were the most effective (pp. 213-218).

According to Rye and Sparks (1991), "The school counselor is often criticized by teachers, administrators, parents, and community members. Criticism may be due to a lack of sufficient evidence of effectiveness in the counseling program" (p. 263). In order to continue to provide services, counselors must obtain approval from these groups. This can be accomplished by demonstrating that the needs of the population are being meet.

To become effective, Rye and Sparks recommended that

goals be established, a system in which counselors can perform duties effectively be created, a counseling staff that believes in giving every student the opportunity to develop his/her potential to the maximum be organized, a climate of open communication among students, teachers, administrators, and community leaders be established, and a method of evaluating counseling services through needs assessment tools be developed (pp. 266-267).

This study demonstrated the need to let others know what is being accomplished in the counseling department. School counselors sometimes get so involved in the task at hand that they forget that they must let others know what they are doing. One way to demonstrate to the community what counseling services are provided in a school is to prepare a packet of pertinent information related to counselor activities and present it to the members of the school board at a monthly meeting. This would give the school board and other members of the community an opportunity to become familiar with the role and function of the school counselor in their school district.

Summary of Review of Literature

In many of the studies cited, the opinions of the students were considered very valuable in determining whether the students were using the services, how students perceived counselors, and where changes needed to be made to better serve the population. Results of student surveys can

be used to evaluate programs, to present results to school boards and principals for funding and movement on the career ladder, and to present to state evaluators (Bruckner & Thompson, 1987, p. 196).

It is obvious that the role of the counselor is perceived in many different ways depending on who is making the judgment. Some principals view counselors as glorified secretaries and record keepers rather than professionals who are capable of being working partners assisting them with important decisions and program development. On the other hand, some parents view counselors as individuals who can "fix" their children when there is a problem at school or at home and become rather frustrated when the counselors do not produce the desired change. Unfortunately, counselors do not have that magic touch. Somewhere in between the idea of record keeper and magician is the role of counselors. Perhaps the best way to describe the counselor's role is as that of "educational ombudsmen" as suggested by George (1986), but Tennyson and Miller's (1989) view of counselors is somewhat more realistic. They concluded that the role of counselors should include counseling, consulting, assisting in career plans, evaluating and assessing, developing guidance programs and performing administrative support services, but as they found in their study, most time is spent in working with students with personal problems, helping with educational and career plans, and scheduling

classes (p. 257).

Evaluation and accountability are important for the survival of any program especially one that is funded by state and local taxes as is the case with counseling programs in public schools. Counselors cannot afford to say there is no time for evaluation for their positions may depend on it. As Bishop and Trembley (1987) have suggested, evaluations provide information about the usefulness of the services available and about where changes need to be made (p. 492).

Effectiveness is the key to any program. What makes a counseling program effective depends on the goals of the school and the proficiency of the people making them. It seems Dagley's (1987) concept that guidance in the schools is for all students to help them develop to the maximum in all areas of their lives is a worthwhile and ambitious goal for all counseling programs (p. 102). The problem is knowing the necessary steps to attain that goal. Schmidt (1986) gave some noteworthy advice to counselors on attaining such a goal. He said to be identifiable, capable, available, and accountable (p. 16).

The literature is rich and full with information on evaluation of counseling programs and ways to achieve effective programs but since school counseling is still considered a relatively new field, definitive answers on the best methods and instruments are not yet available. It

seems that the best criteria for accountability are the judgments of the predominant recipients of the services specifically, the students and faculty. The researcher of this study has attempted to make a contribution to the literature dealing with the evaluation of counseling services in general and to determine where changes need to be made to improve the effectiveness of the services at one high school in particular.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of the counseling services at a selected suburban high school. The study involved a descriptive-survey type of research with the target populations being members of the senior class and the faculty at that high school. Members of each group were asked to complete a survey regarding the counseling services provided at the high school. Results of surveys were analyzed and reported, and recommendations were made.

Sample

The target populations of this study were the senior class consisting of 620 students and all 135 teachers and administrators at the selected school. The senior grade level was chosen for two significant reasons. First, the seniors were at the school for 3 years and had the longest exposure to the services available at the high school. Second, because of the assignment of counselors to a specific class each year, all the counselors employed, with the exception of one new staff member, had students in this senior class as their counselees during at least one year of

high school.

A random sample of 100 seniors was to be given a survey consisting of questions about the counseling services. The students were chosen by systematic random sampling (selecting names with the same interval in between each selection from a list of all seniors). This sample was approximately 16% of the total senior class.

All administrators and teachers at the selected high school were given a survey to complete. This involved the total population of administrators and teachers which was 135 people.

Instruments

The instrument for students used in this study was the Counseling Services Assessment Blank (CSAB) designed by James C. Hurst and Richard G. Weigel (1968) and is available from Rocky Mountain Behavioral Science Institute, Inc. The instrument provides feedback information concerning the effectiveness of counseling services. It can be used to find areas that need improvement and to help in facilitating those improvements.

The survey is designed with a high face validity. The Likert-type response items range from "not at all" to "very much" with a "not applicable to me" space available for most questions. There are 27 items on the survey as follows:

1. Demographics (items 1-6)
2. Student's reasons for using services (items 7-

8)

3. Student's perceived growth as a result of the counseling services provided (items 9-13)
4. Evaluation of the services offered, e.g., individual counseling, testing, etc. (items 14-24)
5. Student's perception of the department's image and role in the institution (items 25-26)
6. Dialogue responses (free response on item 27).

Reliability of the instrument was reported by Davidshofer in 1975. He conducted a study to measure the test-retest reliability at intervals of 1 month and 2 years. Results indicated a moderate to high relationship for almost all items for responses separated by either of the time intervals. The exceptions to this were item 9 (gain in self information), item 22 (adequacy of physical facilities), and item 23 (felt adequacy for seeking counseling), with correlations being low for the 2 year interval. Significance was reported at the .01 level for nearly all test-retest correlations (Butler, 1979, pp. 2-3).

Validity of the CSAB was assessed by Harman (1971) at the University of Kentucky Counseling and Testing Center. After a statistical analysis using *t* tests, he reported that

> The Counseling Services Assessment Blank is an adequate instrument by which clients can assess the counseling services provided to them....In summary, the Counseling Services Assessment Blank fulfills its promise in assessing the services provided by a

counseling agency (p. 497).

Although this survey was designed for the evaluation of counseling services at colleges and universities, it provides the necessary questions for the evaluation of counseling services at a high school. Some modifications were made. The requests for name and student number were removed and ethnicity and "number of years at this high school..." were inserted. Item 5 was changed to "plans after high school". Item 6 included number of counseling sessions "did you attend each year". A sample copy of the CSAB with modifications is located in Appendix A. A small sample of 8 students was used to pretest the CSAB with the reported modifications. Changes were made to assure the desired data would be obtained.

The administrator/teacher questionnaire contains an information sheet and 13 items as follows:

1. Number of contacts with a counselor and reason for contact (items 1-2)
2. Evaluation of the counselors in various roles and the services provided by the counseling department (items 3-6)
3. Administrator/teacher perception of the department's image and role in the institution (items 10-12)
4. Dialogue responses (free response on items 3 and 13).

The administrator/teacher information sheet contains eight demographic items.

The administrator/teacher survey, with a few exceptions, contains questions that can be answered using the Likert-type response scale ranging from such responses as "of no help at all" to "very helpful" with a "not applicable to me" response for some items. There are a few open ended questions on the instrument. The questionnaire was field tested on a group of 4 faculty members before it was distributed to the entire sample.

Procedure

The survey method of research was used in this study. The initial distribution of questionnaires to the students began the week of March 23, 1992, in the following manner. After the students were identified by systematic random sampling, the questionnaires were distributed by requesting the students come to the guidance center in groups of about 10 at a time. A cover page was given to them explaining the purpose of the study (evaluation of the counseling services) and how they were chosen for the study. The importance of answering the questions honestly and the guarantee of anonymity were stressed both on the cover sheet and verbally by the researcher. The students were given time to answer the survey and were requested to complete it before they left the counseling center. All completed surveys were collected by April 3, 1992.

The administrator/teacher questionnaire and cover sheet (Appendix B) explaining the study were distributed to all high school administrators and teachers which was 135 individuals. This occurred during the week of April 20, 1992. Faculty members were requested to returned them by April 24, 1992. An announcement was made on April 27, 1992, as a reminder to return all completed surveys by the end of that day.

Analysis

The research used in this study was a descriptive design. On the student questionnaire, the demographic data (items 1-6) were reported in order to fully describe the sample. Items 7, 8, and 25 which are ranking items were coded 1 = highest rank and 3 = lowest rank. Items 9-13, which are evaluative items dealing with the student's perceived growth, were coded 1 = not at all to 6 = very much. The remainder of the items were coded in a similar fashion.

On the administrator/teacher questionnaire, the demographic data were reported to fully describe the sample. Evaluative items 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 were coded on a Likert-type scale similar to the student questionnaire. Item 12 was coded in the same manner.

The means, medians, and standard deviations were computed for items 9 through 24 on the student questionnaire and for items 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12 on the administrator/

teacher questionnaire. The evaluative content of each item was determined by the degree of agreement or disagreement of the response with each item. The means, in particular, were used to assess the effectiveness of the counseling services. Some comparisons were made between the two groups. Tables are utilized to report the data.

Summary

This study was a descriptive-survey type of research. The target populations were seniors and faculty at a selected high school. The instruments used were the Counseling Services Assessment Blank (CSAB) for the students and a survey constructed by the researcher for the faculty. Questionnaires were distributed to both groups and were returned to the researcher for analysis. Demographic information was recorded and measures of central tendency were computed based on the data received. Results are reported in table form.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the data obtained from the surveys distributed to students and faculty members at the selected high school. The results of the Counseling Services Assessment Blank (CSAB) and the Administrator/ Teacher Questionnaire are presented in table form with explanations. There are 26 tables consisting of 7 tables reporting demographics and 8 tables reporting results from the CSAB plus 7 tables describing demographics and 4 tables reporting results from the Administrator/Teacher Questionnaire. The research questions presented in Chapter 1 were used to guide the reporting of the data.

Demographics of Student Sample

The CSAB was to be distributed to 100 students randomly selected. Four students were absent during the week of distribution. Tables 1-7 report the demographics of the student sample containing the 96 of the 100 students who completed the survey.

Table 1 shows the largest percentage of students (71.88%) was white while the smallest percent was native American (1.04%). Black, Asian, and Hispanic students were

represented with varying percentages.

TABLE 1

ETHNICITY	PERCENT
WHITE	71.88%
BLACK	12.50%
HISPANIC	7.29%
ASIAN	4.17%
NATIVE AMERICAN	1.04%
UNMARKED	3.12%

The breakdown of gender was well-distributed with 47.92% being male and 52.08% being female as revealed in Table 2.

TABLE 2

GENDER	PERCENT
MALE	47.92%
FEMALE	52.08%

The ages of the students in the sample are reported in Table 3 with the majority of students being 17 years old. The range of ages was 17 to 19 years of age.

TABLE 3

AGE	PERCENT
17	53.13%
18	43.75%
19	3.12%

One student (1.04%) reported being married while 97.92% marked single for marital status (Table 4).

TABLE 4

MARITAL STATUS	PERCENT
SINGLE	97.92%
MARRIED	1.04%
UNMARKED	1.04%

Students' plans for after high school (Table 5) ranged from college being the most popular to the missions being the least preferred.

TABLE 5

PLANS AFTER HIGH SCHOOL	PERCENT
COLLEGE	86.46%
TECHNICAL SCHOOL	4.17%
WORK AND COLLEGE	4.17%
WORK	2.08%
MILITARY	2.08%
MISSIONS	1.04%

The majority of students (88.54%) was in attendance at the selected high school for all 3 years. Only 5.21% reported being at the school for 1 year (Table 6).

TABLE 6

YEARS AT THIS HIGH SCHOOL	PERCENT
3 YEARS	88.54%
2 YEARS	4.17%
1 YEAR	5.21%
UNMARKED	2.08%

The range of reported individual sessions ranged from 0 to 12 with 3 being the mode as compared with the range of 0 to 8 for group sessions with 1 being the mode (Table 7).

TABLE 7

NO. OF SESSIONS	INDIVIDUAL	GROUP
RANGE	0-12	0-8
MODE	3	1

Students' Reasons for Using Services

Of the 96 students surveyed, 79 answered the question on ranking the reasons for coming for counseling. The choices were vocational, personal, or educational. Educational reason was chosen number 1 by 55.70% while personal was ranked number 3 by 64.56%. Results are summarized in Table 8 below.

TABLE 8

STUDENT RANKINGS OF REASONS
FOR COMING FOR COUNSELING

RESPONSES=79	1	2	3
VOCATIONAL	25.32%	56.96%	17.72%
PERSONAL	18.98%	16.46%	64.56%
EDUCATIONAL	55.70%	26.58%	17.72%

Specific needs that brought students to the counseling center are given in Table 9. Choices included to gain information about self (abilities, behaviors, interests,

personality), to gain information about the environment (primarily educational institutions and occupations), to resolve conflict within self (feelings, goals, interests, or behaviors that were incompatible with each other), to resolve conflict with others (feelings, goals, interests or behaviors that were incompatible with those of other people), or to overcome a lack of skill (reading, study work, social situations). To obtain information about the environment was ranked number 1 by 48.47% while to overcome a lack of skill was ranked last by 51.43%.

TABLE 9

STUDENT RANKINGS OF SPECIFIC NEEDS
THAT BROUGHT THEM TO THE COUNSELING CENTER
(REPORTED IN PERCENTS)

RESPONSES = 70	1	2	3	4	5
GAIN INFO ABOUT SELF	14.29	31.43	21.43	15.71	17.14
GAIN INFO ABOUT ENVIRONMENT	48.57	15.71	11.43	11.43	12.86
RESOLVE CONFLICT WITH SELF	18.57	22.86	28.57	27.14	2.86
RESOLVE CONFLICT WITH OTHERS	10.00	15.71	22.86	35.72	15.71
OVERCOME LACK OF SKILL	8.57	14.29	15.71	10.00	51.43

Student Evaluation of Perceived Growth

Research question 1: Are students able to obtain information about themselves through the counseling

services? There were 68 student responses to this item on the questionnaire. The mean was 3.66 on a scale of 1 to 6 (same scale for all items).

Research question 2: Are students able to obtain information about education and occupations through the counseling services? There were 84 students who answered this item and the mean was 4.48.

Research question 3: Are students able to resolve conflicts within themselves as a result of the counseling services? This item was answered by 52 students. The mean was calculated to be 3.37.

Research question 4: Are students able to resolve conflicts with others as a result of the counseling services? There were 60 responses to this item with the mean computed as 3.38.

Research question 5: Are students able to develop academic, social, and/or work skills s a result of the counseling services? This item was answered by 54 students with a calculated mean of 3.52.

The means, medians, and standard deviations for the above components are reported in Table 10.

TABLE 10

MEANS, MEDIANS, AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS
FOR EVALUATION OF PERCEIVED GROWTH
(BASED ON A SCALE OF 1-6)

EVALUATION ITEMS	MEAN	MEDIAN	S.D.	RESPONSE
GAIN INFO ABOUT SELF	3.66	3.31	1.16	68
GAIN INFO ABOUT ENVIRONMENT	4.48	4.43	1.22	84
RESOLVE CONFLICT WITH SELF	3.37	3.18	1.24	52
RESOLVE CONFLICT WITH OTHERS	3.38	3.14	1.37	60
OVERCOME LACK OF SKILL	3.52	3.38	1.42	54

Student Evaluation of Services

Research Question 6: Do students find the tests administered by the counselor(s) to be helpful? A total of 82 students responded to this item. The mean was figured as 4.17.

Research Question 7: Do students feel counselor(s) will maintain confidentiality of the information disclosed in individual counseling sessions? There were 93 responses to this question. The mean was computed as 5.22.

Research Question 8: Do students feel the other group members will maintain confidentiality of the information disclosed in group counseling sessions? The mean of the responses from the 64 students who answered this question was 4.40.

Research Question 9: Do students view the overall individual counseling sessions to be a positive experience? There were 91 responses to this item with a computed mean of 4.70.

Research Question 10: Do students view the overall group counseling sessions to be a positive experience? The calculated mean from the 81 responses to this item was 4.37.

Research Question 11: Do students find their individual counselor(s) to be helpful? There were 95 answers to this item. One student did not respond. The mean was figured to be 4.91.

Research Question 12: Do students find their group counselor(s) to be helpful? There were 81 students who responded to this item. The mean was determined to be 4.55.

Research Question 13: Do students perceive other group members to be helpful? The mean for this item was 3.99 as determined from the 67 responses.

Research Question 14: Do students perceive the physical facilities of the counseling center to be conducive to counseling? There was a total of 93 students who answered this item. The mean was computed to be 4.62.

Research Question 15: Do students see their coming for counseling as a demonstration of strength and adequacy? The mean from the 94 responses to this questions was calculated to be 4.49.

Research Question 16: Do students view the overall

counseling experience to be positive? One student did not answer this item and of the 95 responses the mean was determined to be 4.66.

The data concerning the above research questions are reported in Table 11. Also, a summary of the evaluation of the overall counseling experience is given by race in Table 12 and by gender in Table 13.

TABLE 11

MEANS, MEDIANS, AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS
FOR EVALUATION OF SERVICES
(STUDENTS)

EVALUATION ITEMS	MEAN	MEDIAN	S.D.	RESPONSE
HELPFULNESS OF TESTS	4.17	4.02	1.00	82
CONFIDENTIALITY OF COUNSELOR	5.22	5.32	.78	93
CONFIDENTIALITY OF GROUP MEMBERS	4.40	4.30	1.15	64
OVERALL INDIVIDUAL COUN.	4.70	4.49	.99	91
OVERALL GROUP COUNSELING	4.37	4.22	.99	81
HELPFULNESS OF INDIVIDUAL COUN.	4.91	5.13	1.04	95
HELPFULNESS OF GROUP COUNSELOR	4.55	4.31	.88	81
HELPFULNESS OF GROUP MEMBERS	3.99	4.03	.97	67
ADEQUACY OF PHYSICAL FAC.	4.62	4.41	.98	93
ADEQUACY OF SELF FOR SEEKING HELP	4.49	4.28	.95	94
OVERALL COUNSELING EXP.	4.66	4.41	.95	95

(Scale = 1-6)

TABLE 12

EVALUATION OF OVERALL COUNSELING BY RACE

RACE	MEAN	MEDIAN	S.D.	REPLIES
NAT. AMER.	5.50	5.50	0.00	1
ASIAN	5.00	5.00	.56	4
HISPANIC	4.36	4.38	1.27	7
BLACK	4.67	5.07	1.10	12
WHITE	4.64	4.37	.90	68
UNMARKED	--	--	--	4

TABLE 13

EVALUATION OF OVERALL COUNSELING BY GENDER

GENDER	MEAN	MEDIAN	S.D.	REPLIES
MALE	4.68	4.41	.94	45
FEMALE	4.65	4.41	.96	50
UNMARKED	--	--	--	1

Student Perception of Department's Role and Image

Question 24 on the questionnaire asked the students to rank the concerns they perceived the counselors emphasized at this particular school. The choices were vocational, personal, or educational. Of the 85 students responding to this question, 47.06% viewed educational concerns as the primary emphasis of the counseling staff. They rated personal concerns as the least emphasized area. Table 14

below summarizes the results.

TABLE 14

STUDENT RANKINGS OF CONCERNS THE COUNSELORS EMPHASIZE

RESPONSES = 85	1	2	3
VOCATIONAL	41.18%	41.18%	17.64%
PERSONAL	11.76%	21.18%	67.06%
EDUCATIONAL	47.06%	37.64%	15.30%

Question 26 asked the students to name other services or offices in the school that they feel are most similar to the counseling services. Of the 96 students in the sample, 61 answered this question, 4 with multiple answers. Table 15 gives the percentage of responses for each category.

TABLE 15

SERVICES OR OFFICES SIMILAR TO COUNSELING SERVICES
(MULTIPLE RESPONSES = 64)
(N = 61)

OFFICE OR SERVICE	PERCENT
TEACHERS	47.54%
NOTHING	24.60%
PRINCIPALS	13.12%
NURSE	6.56%
VOCATIONAL OFFICE	6.56%
LIBRARY	3.28%
ATTENDANCE OFFICE	1.64%
MULTI-CULTURAL CLUB	1.64%
STUDENT COUNCIL	1.64%

Demographics of Faculty Sample

Of the 135 surveys distributed to faculty members, 70 were returned. Various departments were represented in the sample. The percentages are delineated in Table 16 with the English department being the most represented and the computer science department being the least.

TABLE 16

DEPARTMENT	PERCENT
ENGLISH	15.71%
MATHEMATICS	14.28%
VOCATIONAL	12.86%
HEALTH/P.E.	8.57%
SOCIAL STUDIES	8.57%
FOREIGN LANGUAGE	7.14%
SCIENCE	7.14%
BUSINESS	4.29%
HOME ECONOMICS	4.29%
ADMINISTRATION	2.86%
SPECIAL EDUCATION	2.86%
COMPUTER SCIENCE	1.43%
UNMARKED	10.00%

The breakdown by gender is given in Table 17 with women more than doubling the number of men.

TABLE 17

GENDER	PERCENT
MALE	30.00%
FEMALE	67.14%
UNMARKED	2.86%

Most faculty members responding to the questionnaire had been at the selected school for between 1 and 10 years

representing over half of the sample (Table 18).

TABLE 18

YEARS AT THIS SCHOOL	PERCENT
1-5 YEARS	25.71%
6-10 YEARS	25.71%
11-15 YEARS	11.43%
16-20 YEARS	21.43%
21-25 YEARS	2.86%
26+ YEARS	2.86%
UNMARKED	10.00%

Those on the west campus constituted almost three fourths of the sample (Table 19).

TABLE 19

LOCATION	PERCENT
WEST CAMPUS	72.86%
EAST CAMPUS	27.14%

Over 30% of the faculty taught more than one grade (Table 20).

TABLE 20

GRADE OF STUDENTS	PERCENT
10TH GRADE	30.00%
11TH GRADE	18.57%
12TH GRADE	14.29%
MORE THAN ONE GRADE	32.86%
UNMARKED	4.28%

The range of contacts with counselors ranged from 1 to over 30 by individual faculty members (Table 21) and the number of parent conferences with a counselor ranged from 0 to over 10 (Table 22).

TABLE 21

NO. OF CONTACTS WITH COUNSELORS	PERCENT
1-10 CONTACTS	62.86%
11-20 CONTACTS	22.86%
21-30 CONTACTS	1.43%
31+ CONTACTS	4.28%
UNMARKED	8.57%

TABLE 22

NO. OF PARENT CONFERENCES WITH COUNSELORS	PERCENT
0	42.86%
1	20.00%
2	22.86%
3	5.71%
4	1.43%
5	1.43%
10+	1.43%
UNMARKED	4.28%

Faculty's Reasons for Contacting Counselors

All of the faculty members in the sample answered the question as to why they sought the help of the counselors. Among their choices were grades of students, personal problems of students, drug use by students, classroom problem with students, or other. Some respondents made multiple choices resulting in a total of 175 responses. Of the 70 faculty members, 94.29% saw counselors regarding the grades of students. The lowest percent was that of drug use among students with only 1.00%. The "other" category represented 11.43% which included reasons concerning students' attendance, suicidal tendencies, adjustment (e.g., foreign exchange students), illness and make-up work, and course selections. This information is reported in Table 23.

TABLE 23

FACULTY REASONS FOR CONTACTING COUNSELORS
(MULTIPLE RESPONSES = 175)
(N = 70)

REASONS	PERCENT
GRADES	94.29%
PERSONAL	88.57%
CLASSROOM PROBLEM	45.71%
OTHER	11.43%
DRUGS	1.00%

Faculty Evaluation of Services

Research Question 17: Do teachers and/or administrators perceive counselor(s) to be of assistance to them when they encounter students with academic and personal problems? There were 68 responses to this item with a 4.78 mean on a scale of 1 to 6 (same scale used for all items).

Research Question 18: Do teachers and/or administrators view counselor(s) to be of assistance during parent conferences? Based on the 38 responses to this item, the mean was calculated to be 5.18.

Research Question 19: Do teachers and/or administrators consider the time students spend out of the classroom to see their counselor(s) to be well-spent? A total of 58 faculty members answered this item. The mean was computed to be 4.40.

Research Question 20: Do teachers and/or

administrators view counselor(s) to be helpful to students? There were 69 responses to this item with a computed mean of 4.59.

Research Question 21: Do teachers and/or administrators consider the time students spend in taking tests administered by the counselor(s) to be well-spent? Based on the 65 responses to this item, a mean of 3.52 was calculated.

Research Question 22: Do teachers and/or administrators give the overall counseling services a positive rating? The mean of the overall rating of the 69 faculty members who answered this item was 4.64.

Research Question 23: Do teachers and/or administrators perceive the physical facilities of the counseling center to be conducive to counseling? There were 67 responses to this item with a computed mean of 5.07.

The above data are summarized in the Table 24.

TABLE 24

MEANS, MEDIANS, AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS
FOR EVALUATION OF SERVICES
(FACULTY)

EVALUATION ITEM	MEAN	MEDIAN	S.D.	REPLIES
HELPFULNESS OF COUNSELOR	4.78	5.02	1.03	68
HELPFULNESS OF COUNSELOR IN PARENT CONF.	5.18	5.18	.73	38
STUDENTS' USE OF TIME TO SEE COUNSELOR	4.40	4.24	1.05	58
HELPFULNESS OF COUNSELOR FOR STUDENTS	4.59	4.35	1.02	69
STUDENTS' USE OF TIME FOR TESTING	3.52	3.24	1.23	65
OVERALL COUNS. SERV.	4.64	4.36	.95	69
ADEQUACY OF PHYSICAL FAC.	5.07	5.14	.84	67

Faculty Perception of Department's Role and Image

The members of the faculty were asked to rank the concern they felt the counselors at the selected high emphasize. The choices included vocational, personal. and educational. Among the 53 respondents, the number 1 choice of 64.15% was educational. Vocational was chosen last by 71.70%. The breakdown of percentages is presented in Table 25.

TABLE 25

FACULTY RANKINGS OF CONCERNS THE COUNSELORS EMPHASIZE

RESPONSES = 53	1	2	3
VOCATIONAL	7.55%	20.75%	71.70%
PERSONAL	28.30%	47.17%	24.53%
EDUCATIONAL	64.15%	32.08%	3.77%

When the faculty members were asked to compare the counseling operation with other services at the school, only 15 of the 70 responded with an appropriate answer. Some did not understand the question and others left it blank. Table 26 reports the results of those who did respond to the question. Some answered in multiple responses.

TABLE 26

SERVICES OR OFFICES SIMILAR TO COUNSELING SERVICES
(MULTIPLE RESPONSES = 18)

(N = 15)

OFFICE OR SERVICE	PERCENT
NOTHING	26.67%
TEACHERS	20.00%
PRINCIPALS	15.00%
REGISTRAR	13.34%
AT RISK TEAM	6.67%
BEHAVIOR ADJ. CLASS	6.67%
NURSE	6.67%
STUDY CENTER	6.67%

Data on Dialogue Responses of Students

There was one free response question (27) on the CSAB which read, "Is there any thing else you would like to tell us?" Of the 96 students completing the survey, 40 or 41.67% answered this question with a dialogue response. There are five distinct categories in which these responses can be classified: positive remarks about services (42.50%), negative remarks about services (22.50%), college and scholarship information (15.00%), counselor/student ratio (12.50%), and suggestions and comments (7.50%). The following quotes are representative examples of students' remarks:

Positive Remarks about Services (42.50%)

I think the counselors here are doing a good job and I appreciate everything they have done for me.

Keep up the good work!

The counselors are very helpful and give good advice.

I think y'all are doing very good jobs at counseling us students, [sic] on issues that range from Vocational to Personal Counseling.

I feel that the counselours [sic] here are very good at what they do.

Doing a good job.

I think Duncanville has taught me enough to grow up and go out in the real world, and I would like to thank my counselor for taking all the time and patience she did in helping me.

I believe that the counseling center here at DHS is one of the best in the State. I don't believe that there is anything that needs to be changed.

Thanks for all the help.

Negative Remarks about Services (22.50%)

I feel counselors in which we are assigned should be able to be reached more easily.

Some counselors may not treat you with absolute fairness.

Don't put meetings over the students.

Try to do a better job!

I feel students will not just openly come to a counselor and engage in a conversation concerning personal problems. The counselors need to be on a friend level more than a Advocate of Justice level, which is how they are often viewed. Need to focus more on personal needs and problems.

College and Scholarship Information (15.00%)

I found my counselor very helpful in getting information about my college choices.

They have helped me get college information & Scholarship etc.

My counselor has been helpful, in getting the papers and information required to the college I am going to attend in Fall of 92.

Counselor/Student Ratio (12.50%)

Not enough counselors for the number of students attending our high school.

I think this school has a very good counseling program, however sometimes I think it needs a larger staff because the counselors are very busy.

With larger classes coming into the school you should seriously consider getting more counselors. Counselors are very important and no one should be forced to miss talking to one b/c the one's [sic] we have are too busy."

Suggestions and Comments (7.50%)

> I also feel that a person should have one counselor throughout his or her own career so the counselor can see how the individual matures and understand them better and not hear from other counselors.
>
> Including a sexed [sic] program of lectures & brochures would be beneficial to all students. Not a class, but make it easily available.
>
> I honestly hope that counselors have kept confident everything a student has asked to be kept in confidence. My belief is that they do & will continue to do so and help present, past, & future students that way. Life is complicated, with the help of some counselors, school can be a brighter & better place with less conflict.

Data on Dialogue Responses of Faculty

There was a free response (13) on the Administrator/ Teacher survey which read, "Please comment below on any other aspect of the counseling services provided at DHS." Of the 70 faculty members completing the survey, 31 or 44.29% answered this question with a dialogue response. There are four categories in which these responses fall: positive remarks about services (22.58%), negative remarks about services (25.81%), group counseling (16.13%), and suggestions and comments (35.48%). The following quotes are representative examples of faculty remarks:

Positive Remarks (22.58%)

> The counselors with whom I have dealt have all been very pleasant and professional. (Math Dept.)
>
> I really appreciate the help I get - even if it's only sympathy - we can't solve all the student's problems - even though we are wonderful! (English Dept.)

I really appreciate our counseling staff. They are always prompt in dealing with problems my students have. Also, the counselors show support for me toward the students & parents. (Vocational Dept.)

I have taught 29 years in other schools. You do as well, or better than any groups I've worked with. (Math Dept.)

I appreciate counselor informing me of health or family problems of students! It assists me in dealing with the student. I appreciate counselors objectively orienting students on "appropriate" academic schedule. (Foreign Language Dept.)

Negative Remarks (25.81%)

Counselors could be better informed about the math curriculum for course selection and placement. (Math Dept.)

I resent a counselor taking the student's side in front of the student. If there's a problem, we should discuss it first then do what's in the student's best interest. Putting a teacher on the defensive is not the way to start a discussion. (Vocational Dept.)

The counselors need to review each year the changing course curriculum. We may offer the same course but to a new population. The students & teachers become frustrated when students are incorrectly assigned. I am also concerned when counselors pick some teachers over others because problems they have had with a teacher in the past. Even the teachers they consider "good" will not do an effective job with a larger class full of "special" cases. (Math Dept.)

I feel that too many times the counselors pit teachers & students against one another. (Vocational Dept.)

Too much emphasis is put on college. It would be great if everyone went, but what are the ones going to be able to do with themselves that don't go to college? The students need to have a field or career to fall back on. We need academic and vocational courses. Let's be realistic and honest with everyone. (Dept. not indicated)

Group Counseling (16.13%)

We need some sort of parent/child group counseling. (English Dept.)

I would like to see more "groups" offered - maybe at lunch or during class for specific issues, especially all the sexual issues. This is hitting a lot of kids hard, and they feel isolated. (Special Ed. Dept.)

We need continuous support groups that meet once a week to help students living in difficult situations. (Special Ed. Dept.)

Group counseling on different subject
Pregnant student - exist
Drug/alcohol - exist
1. Students living w/ 1 parent
2. Students living w/ disease (life threatening & not)
3. Students who are neglected/abused or have been. (Vocational Dept.)

I believe we need more groups, greater focus on interpersonal relations, cultural understanding, and rational behavior training. (Vocational Dept.)

Suggestions and Comments (35.48%)

I feel that the counselors should not have the responsibility of scheduling students. They spend so much time on paperwork that their actual counseling time is very little. They need to be more available to students & teachers. (Math Dept.)

Less out of class time. (Social Studies Dept.)

Need more communication i.e. staff devel. w/ teachers. (Administration Dept.)

If possible more time for one on one personal counseling and less on testing. (Social Studies Dept.)

I should probably use the counselors more. (Dept. not indicated)

Under staffed. (Science Dept.)

I would like to see peer leadership used with

troubled students. I also hope to see more of an emphasis upon the students rising above their situations - helping others - consentrating [sic] on their responses to their situations. (English Dept.)

Counselors need to be sure they are familiar with & completely understand the prerequisites for courses offered at DHS. (Computer Dept.)

I realize that the increasing quantity of personal problems due to unstable home situations, etc., etc. tax the time and efforts of the staff. (Foreign Language Dept.)

Summary

The responses from the Counseling Services Assessment Blank and from the Administrator/Teacher Questionnaire supplied sufficient data to perform the study that was proposed and to answer the research questions that were posed. Results are presented in table form. Specific conclusions, implications, and recommendations are provided in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study involved an evaluation of the counseling services at a selected suburban high school. The counselors at the selected high school attempt to meet the needs of the student and faculty populations. To determine if this was being accomplished, some form of evaluation was necessary.

The general purpose of this study was to examine the question: Are the counseling services provided at a selected suburban high school effectively meeting the needs of the students and faculty? Specific research questions were guided by the individual questions on the two surveys that were distributed. The only students involved in this study were seniors and the only faculty members surveyed were administrators and teachers at the selected school. Counseling services were viewed as those normally available at a high school namely, direction, advice, and guidance with academic, career, and personal matters. Students requiring long-term psychological treatment are referred to the appropriate agency or hospital for evaluation and treatment. This study was limited to the counseling services available at one particular high school and the perceptions of seniors and faculty members at that high

school. The results are not to be used to make inferences about high school counseling services in general.

A random sample of 100 seniors and all (135) teachers and administrators were asked to complete surveys regarding the counseling services at the high school. The students were given the Counseling Services Assessment Blank. Of the 100 students selected, 96 completed the survey. The faculty members were given a survey constructed by the researcher. Of the 135 faculty members who were given the survey, 70 completed it. Demographic information from both questionnaires was reported in percentages while other data were reported in percentages, means, medians, and standard deviations. Answers to free response questions were organized into categories and reported as direct quotes.

Most answers on both the student and the administrator/teacher questionnaires required the responses be given on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 6. On such a scale, a 3.0 would be considered an average score. When the means were computed for all questions utilizing the Likert-type scale, all means on both surveys were above 3.0. Implications of these results are discussed below.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to investigate the question: Are the counseling services provided at a selected high school effectively meeting the needs of the student and faculty populations? Specifically, there were

23 research questions.

Research Question 1: Are students able to obtain information about themselves through the counseling services? Since the mean for this question based on 68 student responses was 3.66 on a scale of 1 to 6, it can be concluded student satisfaction with the information obtained through the counseling services concerning themselves is above average.

Research Question 2: Are students able to obtain information about education and occupations through the counseling service? Of the 96 students completing the survey, 84 answered this question. Among the questions dealing with perceived growth, this one was answered by the most students and had the highest mean (4.48). From these results, it can be implied that students are able to obtain information from the counselors about colleges and careers. This is also supported by the fact that 48.57% of the students coming to the counseling center did so to gain information about higher education or careers.

Research Question 3: Are students able to resolve conflicts within themselves as a result of the counseling services? Only 18.57% ranked this as the number one reason for coming to the counseling center. On the basis of the 52 students who answered this question, the mean was 3.37. For those who come for a resolution of conflict within themselves, the satisfaction is above average. Since only

11.76% of the students ranked personal as the area that counselors emphasize and 47.06% rank educational, it can be concluded that students view counselors at this high school placing educational concerns as the major priority. This is as it should be since a high school is an educational institution whose goal is to help students with educational concerns. This does not mean however, that counselors are not available for students with personal problems or that they place educational needs above personal ones.

Research Question 4: Are students able to resolve conflicts with others as a result of the counseling services? The mean for those 60 students answering this question was 3.38 which was again above average although only 10.00% ranked this as the major reason for seeking help at the counseling center. It can be said that those who do come for this reason, on average, are satisfied with the results.

Research Question 5: Are students able to develop academic, social, and/or work skills as a result of the counseling services? Overall this was the least important concern that brought students to the counseling center with only 8.57% ranking it as the number one reason for seeking help from a counselor, but the mean for satisfaction with results was 3.52 with a response from 54 students. It can be concluded that although many students do not come to the counseling center primarily to overcome a lack of skill,

some do leave feeling they have made some progress toward acquiring a desired skill.

Research Question 6: Do students find the tests administered by the counselor(s) to be helpful? Interestingly, 82 of the 96 students responded to this question with a mean score of 4.17 which is well above average. One reason for this may be that many of the tests administered by the counselors are pre-college or college admissions tests such as the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) and Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) which are necessary for college admissions. Also, the counseling center provides interest and career inventories which may be helpful and useful to many students undecided about careers or college majors.

Research Question 7: Do students feel counselor(s) will maintain confidentiality of the information disclosed in individual counseling sessions? Of all the questions on the survey, this one received the highest mean, being 5.22, and it was answered by 93 of the 96 students. From this it can be concluded that students trust that the counselors respect the confidentiality of the counseling session. This should allow the students the freedom to express their concerns openly knowing they will not be shared with others.

Research Question 8: Do students feel the other group members will maintain confidentiality of the information disclosed in group counseling sessions? This question was

answered with a mean score of 4.40 reflecting a high degree of trust from group members concerning confidentiality. This is important since peer support groups have proven to be very effective in helping students cope with a variety of problems from drug abuse to family conflicts. If they feel confident that confidentiality will be maintained, a greater benefit will result from the group experience.

Research Question 9: Do students view the overall individual counseling sessions to be a positive experience? Again, there was a positive response to this question. The mean score was 4.70 which is much above average. The implication is that students feel a high degree of satisfaction with the results of their individual counseling sessions.

Research Question 10: Do students view the overall group counseling sessions to be a positive experience? Students in general also answered this question in a positive manner with the mean score being 4.37. Obviously, many students are satisfied with the group counseling sessions they have attended.

Research Question 11: Do students find their individual counselor(s) to be helpful? Counselors rated high in this area with the mean score of 4.91 from 95 of the 96 students responding. Students seem to be pleased with their counselors and the help they are receiving from them.

Research Question 12: Do students find their group

counselor(s) to be helpful? Group counselor received high grades with the mean score being 4.55. Some of the group sessions during senior year involved information sessions considering college admissions and financial aid. The students appear to be pleased with the information they received.

Research Question 13: Do students perceive other group members to be helpful? With the mean score being 3.99 it can be concluded that on the average, students receive help from other group members.

Research Question 14: Do students perceive the physical facilities of the counseling center to be conducive to counseling? Students rated the physical facilities above average with a mean score of 4.62 with 93 students responding. The counseling center is located where the former library was housed so there is more than adequate room for college catalogues and career information in the waiting area. Also, the individual counseling offices were conference rooms so they are very spacious and private. Storage space is more than sufficient as are the rooms for teacher/parent conferences.

Research Question 15: Do students see their coming for counseling as a demonstration of strength and adequacy? There was a very large response to this question with 94 of the 96 students answering. The mean score was 4.49 which implies that the students feel that their coming to the

counseling center and seeking help is a demonstration of strength on their part.

Research Question 16: Do students view the overall counseling experience to be positive? Only one student did not answer this question. The mean score of 4.66 would indicate that students are using the counseling services and, in general, are pleased with the help they are receiving from the counselors.

Research Question 17: Do teachers and/or administrators perceive counselor(s) to be of assistance to them when they encounter students with academic and personal problems? There were 68 out of 70 responses to this question. The mean of 4.78 was well above average. Like the students, the faculty also avail themselves of the services provided by the counselors and generally agree that the counselors are helpful to them in their dealings with students.

Research Question 18: Do teachers and/or administrators view counselor(s) to be of assistance during parent conferences? Only 38 responses were recorded for this question indicating that the faculty members do not have frequent parent conferences with the counselor present. Those who do have a counselor in attendance during a parent conference rated the helpfulness of the counselor very high with a mean score of 5.18.

Research Question 19: Do teachers and/or

administrators consider the time students spend out of the classroom to see their counselor(s) to be well-spent? The mean score for this response was 4.40. Considering that students are taking time away from classroom instruction to see a counselor, it is a definite compliment to the counselors that the mean was this high. Teachers must genuinely feel that counselors are performing a needed service for their students.

Research Question 20: Do teachers and/or administrators view counselor(s) to be helpful to students? The perception of the faculty concerning the helpfulness of counselors for students is very high. Only one faculty member did not respond to this question and the mean score of those who did was 4.59, well above the average.

Research Question 21: Do teachers and/or administrators consider the time students spend in taking tests administered by the counselor(s) to be well-spent? This question received the lowest rating of all those on the administrator/teacher questionnaire. The mean score of 3.52, although above average, can still be viewed as faculty disapproval of all the testing that is now required by the State.

Research Question 22: Do teachers and/or administrators give the overall counseling services a positive rating? Only one faculty member did not answer this question. Of the 69 who did respond, the mean score

was 4.64 which was well above average. Comparing this score with the students' mean score of 4.66 for the same question, it can be concluded that both groups revealed a high degree of satisfaction with the counseling services available.

Research Question 23: Do teachers and/or administrators perceive the physical facilities of the counseling center to be conducive to counseling? This question generated a high mean score of 5.07. Evidently, the administrators and teachers feel the counseling facilities are very conducive to counseling. As was mentioned above, the area is spacious and attractively furnished and has large private offices for counselors and more than adequate facilities for parent and teacher conferences. The bookshelves contain a large variety of college catalogues and reference books on college majors and financial aid. Also, a computer is available for student use.

Considering that all scores on both the student and the teacher questionnaires were above average, it can be concluded that the counseling services at the selected high school are effective in providing the services the students and teachers require. Based on some of the comments of both groups, there is still definite room for improvement. Recommendations to that end will be delineated subsequently in this chapter.

Implications

The mode for the number of individual sessions students had with their counselors was three and the primary reason they saw a counselor was educational. The number of sessions the average senior has with a counselor was found to be three according to Bewley in a national study of over 17,000 seniors in 1979 (p. 67) which is in accord with this study. Since the mean score for evaluating the helpfulness of these educational sessions was 4.48 with 84 students responding, it can be deducted that the students on the whole are using the services available and are receiving the help that they request with regard to educational matters. As was stated earlier, it stands to reason that since a school is an educational institution, the major concern of both counselors and students should be educational issues and related matters.

It is interesting to note 94.29% of the faculty members saw counselors to discuss students' grades and 88.57% saw counselors to report personal problems or concern of their students. Looking at student responses for needing to see counselors, 81.02% came for a vocational or educational need while only 18.98% came for a personal problem. Obviously, the students are more reluctant to seek help for personal concerns than the teaches are to report them to the counselors. There are a number of studies supporting this finding. In one conducted in Indiana during the 1987-88

school year, seniors were asked to report the type of problems for which they would seek help from their counselors. The results indicated that they would come for both school-related administrative type services and personal problems, but they felt more comfortable about the former (Hutchinson & Reagan, 1989, p. 76). In another study supporting the position that students are reluctant to discuss personal problems, Rowe (1989) gave college freshmen a questionnaire requesting information about the counseling they received senior year of high school. The results revealed that college plans were number one while personal problems were last (p. 261). Also in this regard, when students in the Phoenix Union High School District were asked to evaluate the counseling services available, the students throughout the district found counselors to be available to them, but only a few requested help for personal problem (Norris & Finley, 1982. p. 2).

Many times students will seek the help of peers rather than look to adults even if they are counselors. This leads to the subject of support groups. As was indicated by some of the faculty members, there is a definite need for support groups on the high school campus. It is of extreme importance that there is a well trained facilitator present, but for the most part, students usually provide the help for each other. In sharing their problems, students find they are usually not alone in having to cope with a particular

problem. Many times other members of the group have dealt with or are facing the same dilemma. Although there are presently two support groups in existence, one for those with family problems and one for those recovering from drug or alcohol abuse, others may be needed.

Another area that should be considered as a result of this study is the role of the counselor in the school. As was indicated by both student and teacher comments, the staff is overworked and there is a definite need for additional personnel to handle the tremendous amount of paperwork. So much time is devoted to scheduling classes, changing schedules, preparing for testing, and administering tests, that little time is left for individual and group counseling. If many of the secretarial tasks could be given to aides or clerks, the counselors might be able to handle their 350 to 400 student load more effectively. Too often students must wait days to see counselors because the counselors are preparing for test administration or trying to resolve schedule conflicts. This causes frustration for both students and counselors.

This appears to be a universal problem in the schools throughout the United States. In a study by Norris and Finley (1982) to determine the effectiveness of the counseling activities in the Phoenix Union High School District, the counselors were asked to comment on the services or activities that they would like to see

eliminated from counseling program. The following were some of their comments:

> Spend less time on the important process of registration.
>
> I'd like to see schedule changes removed and given to clerical staff, so that I can concentrate on the things I'd like to do in the areas of group counseling.
>
> Registration and schedule changes.
>
> Schedule changes and attendance contacts. Why not clerical help?
>
> The incredible paperwork evolving from the registration process.
>
> Registration, class changes. It doesn't require a college trained person to accomplish these tasks.
>
> Schedule changes!!
>
> Clerical (pp. 30-31).

The counselors were then asked for any additional comments regarding the counseling program. The following are examples of some of those comments:

> Eliminate some of the counseling positions and hire more registration help so they could do schedule changes and registration and let counselors do what they are trained to do. We are the highest paid registrars in town. I know this is blasphemy, but something should be done.
>
> I feel that testing should be handled by someone who is not in counseling.
>
> Reality says registration and recruitment for various programs take precedence. However, most don't have Master's degrees in schedule changing. Perhaps our effectiveness could be dramatically increased if we could do what we are prepared to do - COUNSEL.
>
> I've become the right hand/arm of administration and have no time for counseling.
>
> I should like the counselor's role in registration re-

> defined. We do have an obligation to properly advise students and parents regarding course selection, diploma requirements, etc.; however, I feel that the actual registration procedure (filling out T-2s, etc.) should be a clerical task, and should not be assigned to counselors. Registration does provide us an opportunity to meet with all our counselees. This time should be taken up with counseling, but it seems too much time is spent doing paper work (pp. 31-32).

Obviously from the above comments it can be deduced that counselors in general are very dissatisfied with their duties involving schedule changes and registration and rightfully so. In this changing world where counselors are seeing more and more students from dysfunctional families who are contemplating suicide, abusing drugs, joining gangs, bringing weapons to school, or dropping out of school in increasing numbers, there is virtually no time for the paperwork that is being requested by their administrators. The role of the school counselor must be reevaluated. This is an issue that needs serious consideration since the schools and, in particular, school counselors, are being bombarded by the impact of social change. The streets have invaded the schools, and not only school counselors, but all educational personnel, are being asked to deal with the resulting problems. The entire educational structure needs to be studied and changes made to meet the demands of these changing times.

Secondary Schools and Social Change

Since educational institutions are social organizations, what happens in society has a direct affect

on what is taught in the schools. Schools are judged by social norms. When these change, schools must change. When there is a crisis in society, it is reflected in the schools. As values change, the school must incorporate those values to remain effective and viable. In other words, schools must adapt if they are to survive.

In the past, secondary schools have been able to accommodate change. Two examples of this are first, when the academy replaced the Latin school and the high school replaced the academy as society's needs changed. Through it all the schools retained the common elements of classrooms, teachers, and administrators. The second example is when the secondary schools switched from academic institutions to utilitarian ones and then back again. The schools must remain stable yet flexible.

One of the functions of schools is to transmit cultural traits and cultural values to the students. This has become a difficult task because the society of America is so pluralistic. It consists of so many groups with conflicting political, economic, religious, and philosophical views, it is impossible to find a common ground. As a result, sometimes schools choose the values of one group over another. Also, traditional values are not always appropriate anymore because of changes caused by racial conflicts, urbanization, feminism, and industrialization.

There are some values that Americans in general have

accepted such as the fundamental worth and dignity of the individual. If this is kept in mind, social differences such as race and political orientations can be accommodated.

There are many reasons for the state of society today. Among them are population growth, strained relationships among different groups, economic conditions, liberal sexual behaviors, and the disintegration of the family. All these influence the state of institutions within society, especially the schools. How can schools prepare students to live in such a disruptive and disturbing environment? According to Smith and Cox (1976), "the schools are expected to prepare youth to assume their place in society by teaching them useful skills, requisite knowledge, appropriate way of thinking, and accepted ways of making judgments" (p. 27). This is a very ambitious task for schools, difficult, if not impossible, in today's society.

How has society come to this point? Problems occur when a society such as that of the United States is passing from a traditional communal orientation to an emergent mass posture (p. 28). The problems develop as a result of the conflicts between those holding on to the traditional values and those pursuing the emerging ones. Some of the questions that should be asked by those determining the purpose of secondary schools are:

1. "What are the basic values of society?"
2. "What are the normative and analytic

conceptions of the social world?"

3. "What is the nature of knowledge?"
4. "What is the nature of rationality?"
5. "What is the nature of the learner?"

After these are considered the following should be asked:

1. "Should secondary education be a common experience for all?"
2. "To what extent should secondary education be general or specific?" (p. 28).

Historically, the purpose of secondary schools seems to be cyclical based on the dominating concept of the time. The question in society today is what is the purpose of secondary education in a transitional society (p. 28).

Contemporary Social Problems and the Schools

Twentieth century America has been facing drastic social changes. So much has happened so rapidly that a stressful generation of young people has emerged. This century has seen two international wars and a number of smaller but yet destructive wars. Divorce has become the choice for 50% of those who marry. The disintegration of the family is apparent with many single parent families. Women's liberation has brought many mothers into the work force creating "latchkey" children. A moral crisis exists in which respect for individuals and their property is no longer a fundamental value. A sexual revolution is in progress with sexual activity beginning in junior high

school or even earlier. Venereal disease and AIDS are spreading quickly through all classes of people. Pornography, adultery, and prostitution are all on the rise. Television substitutes for communication among family members and portrays the glamour of sex and violence. Both church leaders and politicians have been found to be corrupt and only out to make a profit. Illegal drugs are sold on street corners and in school hallways. Street crime is rampant and the normal everyday citizen is afraid to ride on a bus or take a walk in many neighborhoods. The suicide rate is up, being the number two cause of death among teenagers, only surpassed by automobile accidents, many of which are really suicides. This is a very dismal picture of social conditions in the 1990s.

On the positive side, the agrarian and commercial economies have been replaced by an industrial one which may soon be replaced by a technological one. There have been remarkable achievements in the areas of science and math. Men have walked on the moon. Space travel may be available to the general public by the year 2000. Organ transplant surgery has been very successful. Laser technology in medicine and industry is producing incredible advances. Miniature computers have become common tools to the businessman as well as the student.

The question arises, how do schools provide the education and support children need to live in such dynamic

social conditions? Brubacher (1969) suggests that the school has four functions:

1. The conservative function of the school is to conserve the existing social culture. It should represent the values of the status quo.

2. The progressive function of the school is to provide new ideas and social programs. The school needs to take some responsibility for social progress. Education and social change are mutually interactive.

3. The neutral function of the school is to preserve the universal truths and eternal values.

4. The revolutionary function of the school is to accelerate change (pp. 11-24).

Incorporating these functions into a workable system for students of the 1990s is certainly a challenge for educators. It will require innovations and drastic changes in the system as it presently exists.

It seems that the high schools of the 1990s are faced with handling the social problems of youth more than educating them. This is frustrating to teachers who would like to impart their knowledge to students rather than collect weapons, mediate disputes between gangs, and apprehend drug pushers, and it is the challenge of the century for school counselors. The importance of effective counseling programs cannot be overemphasized in the light of contemporary social issues. The school counseling services

may be the only refuge available for the distraught youth of today.

Recommendations

The main purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the counseling services at the selected high school. Although the resulting data indicate that more than adequate services presently are being provided, some changes can be made to raise the effectiveness to a higher level. The following are recommendations to that end related to the findings of this study:

1. Some of the faculty comments suggested the need for more support groups. Possible groups could consist of students of recently divorced parents or those who have had a drastic change in the family structure due to a death or the remarriage of a parent. Other potential groups could focus on physical and/or sexual abuse, illnesses, or parent/teen problems. This is a viable option for students who would prefer to discuss their problems with peers than in individual sessions with counselors.

2. The nemesis of counselors in general is all the paperwork involved with registration and schedule changing. If more clerical help were available for these tasks, counselors would have more time for individual counseling, especially for personal problems. Although students are somewhat reluctant to seek help for these types of problems, if more time were available, counselors would be better able

to develop rapport with students who may need help with private matters.

3. There seems to be a need for more communication between teachers and counselors in the areas of curriculum requirements and placement of students. Perhaps staff meetings with department heads and counselors at least once or twice a year would remedy this situation.

4. Since testing has become so much a part of the regular school program with pre-college tests, college admissions tests, advanced placement tests, minimum skills tests, and a plethora of other examinations, a test coordinator should be considered for a full-time position to relieve the counselors of the enormous amount of time and energy that are required to prepare and administer these tests.

5. Computer terminals connected to a central source of information on students including demographics and academics (grades, class rank) should be considered for all counselors' offices so that they would have immediate access to information about their students. This would conserve on the amount of time counselors expend searching for data on students.

Since the counseling services of high schools are becoming necessary and vital components of the overall educational process, continued research to improve their effectiveness is pivotal. This study could be considered a

starting point for future inquiries that involve effective counseling services. Some recommendations for prospective research as related to this study are as follows:

1. This inquiry was limited to senior students. It may be enlightening to collect data from other grade level students to see how they compare with the responses of seniors. So many seniors seek help from counselors only for college and scholarship information, it may be revealing to determine in what areas the other students request assistance.

2. A follow-up survey a year after graduation might supply some useful data as to what services have helped the students and which need to be changed. Feedback from students including their candid opinions upon reflection could prove to be a valuable source of data for improvement of services.

3. Other groups not directly associated with the school might be surveyed as to their opinions of the counseling department. Specifically, the parents of students would be an excellent population to consider since they have frequent contacts with counselors.

4. Counselors from other schools might be surveyed as to what services they have found to be of most value to the students that they serve. Some of those could be incorporated into the counseling program on a trial basis.

Last Words

The young people of today are society's hope for productive leaders of tomorrow. Counselors have a critical role in helping these young people make the important choices that could steer them toward these leadership positions. Without effective counseling programs and dedicated counselors, this is not possible. Evaluation and accountability are essential components of any efficacious counseling program. Based on the data collected in this evaluation, it can be concluded that on the average, the counseling services at the selected high school are perceived by both students and faculty as being effective in meeting the needs of those who are served. The suggested recommendations should be considered to enhance the services presently being provided.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

STUDENT COVER LETTER AND QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Student:

You have a unique opportunity to be part of a research study involving the evaluation of the counseling services at your high school. The purpose of the study is to determine the strengths and weakness of the program and to improve the services for you and future students.

In order to accomplish this, we need your help. You have been chosen at random to be among the 100 seniors who will take part in this study. We would like you to answer the questions on the attached survey as honestly as possible and to return it to one of the counselors as soon as it is completed.

Please know that your answers will be treated with complete confidentiality and you will not be identified in any way by name or description. Your help is appreciated very much. Results of this study will be available to you upon request.

Sincerely,

The Guidance Staff

COUNSELING SERVICES ASSESSMENT BLANK

Please answer all the following questions in terms of both the individual and group counseling you received. Then return the questionnaire in the envelope provided.

1. Age_____ Race _____
2. Sex_____ Number of years at this school including this year (10-12) _____
3. Marital Status: Single_____ Married_____ Divorced_____ Separated_____ Widowed_____
4. Class: Fresh_____ Soph_____ Junior_____ Senior_____ Grad_____ Other (Specify)_____
5. Plans after high school _____
6. How many counseling sessions did you attend each year (average)
   a. Individual sessions _____ b. group sessions _____

By James C. Hurst, Ph.D. and Richard G. Weigel, Ph.D.
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7. For what reason(s) did you come to counseling? Would you please rank the reasons that apply in order of their importance to you (i.e. "1", "2", and "3").

_____A vocational concern (career choice or planning for the future).

_____A personal concern (adjustments concerning behaviors, attitudes and feelings.)

_____An educational concern (lack of academic skill or information, e.g. reading, study skills, university requirements and procedures, etc.)

8. The reasons may have arisen from a variety of causes. Please rank which causes you feel were applicable in order of their importance to you (i.e. "1", "2", "3", "4", and "5".)

_____Lack of information about yourself (e.g. your abilities, behaviors, interests, personality, etc.)

_____Lack of information about your environment (e.g. information about education, occupations, other individuals or situations.)

_____Conflict within yourself (e.g. your feelings, goals, interests, or behaviors that are incompatible with each other.)

_____Conflict with others (e.g. your feelings, goals, interests, or behaviors that are incompatible with those of people who are most important to you.)

_____Lack of skill (e.g. difficulty in reading, study, work, social situations, etc.)

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Below we would like you to rank different aspects of your counseling by placing a mark in one of the areas on each scale that most nearly describes your reaction to the question. Answer all questions in terms of both the group and individual counseling YOU received.

	Not at all	Very much	Not applicable to me
9. I was able to gain information about myself (e.g. my abilities, behaviors, interests, personality, etc.)	|___|___|___|___|___|___|		☐
10. I was able to gain needed information about the environment (e.g. information about education, occupations, other individuals or situations, etc.)	|___|___|___|___|___|___|		☐
11. I was able to resolve conflict within myself (e.g. my feelings, goals, interests, or behaviors that were incompatible with each other.)	|___|___|___|___|___|___|		☐
12. I was able to resolve conflict with others (e.g. my feelings, goals, interests or behaviors that were incompatible with those of people who are most important to me.)	|___|___|___|___|___|___|		☐
13. I was able to remedy my lack of skill (e.g. difficulty in reading, study, work, social situations, etc.)	|___|___|___|___|___|___|		☐

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Answer all questions in terms of the individual or group counseling YOU received.

Do not mark in these boxes		Of no help at all ... Very helpful	Not applicable to me
☐	14. I found the tests I took to be	| | | | |	☐
		Blabbed all over campus ... Strictly confidential	
☐	15. I felt that the information I disclosed to my counselor(s) would be	| | | | |	
☐	16. I felt that the information I disclosed in the group would be	| | | | |	☐
		Extremely negative ... Extremely positive	
☐	17. How would you rate your overall INDIVIDUAL counseling experience	| | | | |	☐
☐	18. How would you rate your overall GROUP counseling experience	| | | | |	☐
		Of no help at all ... Very helpful	
☐	19. I found my INDIVIDUAL counselor(s) to be	| | | | |	☐
☐	20. I found my GROUP counselor(s) to be	| | | | |	☐
☐	21. I found the other group members to be	| | | | |	☐

☐ 22. I felt the physical facilities of the counseling operation were:

Detrimental to counseling — Conducive to counseling

☐ 23. I saw my coming for counseling as demonstrating

Weakness and inadequacy — Strength and adequacy

☐ 24. How would you rate your total overall counseling experience?

Extremely negative — Extremely positive

25. Which of the following concerns do YOU see the counseling operation on this campus emphasizing (that is, what kinds of concerns are dealt with primarily). Please rank the ones you feel are applicable (i.e. "1", "2", "3").

☐ _____Vocational (career choice or planning for the future).

☐ _____Personal (adjustments concerning behaviors, attitudes and feelings).

☐ _____Educational (lack of academic skill or information, e.g. reading, study skills, university requirements and procedures, etc.)

☐☐ 26. What other service or office on this campus do you feel is most similar to the counseling operation.

_____

27. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

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APPENDIX B

ADMINISTRATOR/TEACHER COVER LETTER AND QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Administrator/Teacher:

The guidance staff would appreciate your help in a research study evaluating the counseling services at this high school. The purpose of the study is to determine the strengths and weakness of the program and to improve the services for you and the students.

In order to accomplish this, please answer the questions on the attached survey as honestly as possible and return it to Candy Gianuzzi as soon as it is completed, preferably by the end of this week April 24th).

Please know that your answers will be treated with complete confidentiality and you will not be identified in any way by name or description. Your help is appreciated. Results of this study will be available to you upon request.

Sincerely,

The Guidance Staff

ADMINISTRATOR/TEACHER INFORMATION

Please check where appropriate:

Administrator _____

Teacher _____

Department (please indicate the name of dept.) _____

Number of years at DHS including this year _____

Sex: F____ M____

Campus: East____ West____

Grade level of most of the students you teach _____

ADMINISTRATOR TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Number of counselor contacts this year to discuss concerns about a student(s) or school related issue _____

2. Reason(s) contacts was/were made (please check all that are appropriate).

   Student's grades _____

   Student's personal or family life _____

   Student using drugs _____

   Problem with a student in the classroom _____

   Other (please elaborate) _____

3. The counselor was

   Of no help at all ... Very helpful ... not applicable to me

   |__|__|__|__|__|__| _____

   Explain below if necessary.

4. The number of parent conferences with a counselor present this year _____

5. During the parent conference the counselor was |__|__|__|__|__|__| _____

6. The time the students take from the classroom to see their counselor is

   wasted ... well-spent

   |__|__|__|__|__|__|

7. With regard to helping students at Duncanville High School, the counselors are

Of no help at all ___|___|___|___|___| very helpful

8. The time students spend in testing is

wasted ___|___|___|___|___| well-spent

9. How would you rate the overall counseling services at DHS?

Extremely negative ___|___|___|___|___| Extremely positive

10. Which of the following concerns do YOU see the counselors at DHS emphasizing (what kinds of concerns are dealt with primarily)? Please rank. (i.e., "1", "2", "3")

Vocational (career plans) _____

Personal (family problems, personal problems, attitudes, feelings) _____

Educational (college plans, grades, schedules) _____

11. What services at DHS do you feel are most similar to the counseling operation?

12. The physical facilities of the counseling center are

Detrimental to counseling ___|___|___|___|___| Conducive to counseling

13. Please comment on any other aspect of the counseling services provided at DHS?

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